

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00850 280642Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

CU-02 EUR-12 EB-08 TRSE-00 /071 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7692

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0850

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT CH

SUBJ: MID-APRIL PROVINCIAL OBSERVATIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. BRITISH EMBOFF VISITING SUCHOU (APRIL 10) AND SHANGHAI (APRIL 12) WITNESSED SIGNS OF ONGOING POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN FORMER CITY AND CONTINUED AIRING OF ECONOMIC GRIEVANCES IN LATTER. INDIAN EMBOFF IN HANGCHOW (APRIL 16-18) AND TSINAN (APRIL 18) OBSERVED ONLY ORTHODOX POSTERS CALLING FOR ATTENTION TO RAILWAY SECURITY AND BANNERS HAILING PUBLICATION OF VOLUME FIVE OF CHAIRMAN MAO'S SELECTED WORKS. EN ROUTE TO PEKING THROUGH TSINAN, HE WITNESSED SERIOUS TRAIN CRASH. END SUMMARY.

2. BRITISH EMBOFF TRAVELLING WITH THATCHER PARTY PASSED FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS ON SUCHOU AND SHANGHAI:

(A) SUCHOU (APRIL 10): PHOTOGRAPHS OF MUNICIPAL STRUGGLE SESSIONS AGAINST ERSTWHILE FIRST SECRETARY HUA LIN-SEN AND OTHER MUNICIPAL PARTY COMMITTEE LEADERS WERE DISPLAYED IN GLASS CASES ALONG SIDEWALKS. SLOGANS INDICATED THAT HUA LIN-SEN, DISMISSED LAST DECEMBER, HAD NOT YET RECANTED AND THAT A "HIGH TIDE" IN THE STRUGGLE

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AGAINST HIM SHOULD BE WHIPPED UP DURING APRIL.

(B) SHANGHAI (APRIL 12): THE WANG CHEN-YI CASE, REPORTED IN SEVERAL EARLIER CABLES, APPARENTLY CONTINUES TO FESTER. ON ADDITIONAL POSTER, SEEMINGLY DRAFTED BY A SEMILITERATE SHANGHAI NATIVE, SUPPORTED WANG CHEN-YI AND CLAIMED THAT THE AUTHOR HAD ALSO BEEN PERSECUTED BY CONFINEMENT -- UNJUSTLY -- TO A MENTAL INSTITUTION. OTHER POSTERS IN CENTRAL SHANGHAI

ALONG THE BUND EXPRESSED GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE RATIONING SYSTEM.

3. INDIAN EMBOFF ON PRIVATE VISIT TO HANGCHOW (APRIL 16-18) PASSED FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS. IN THE VICINITY OF HANGCHOW THERE WERE SEVERAL KIOSKS ALONG THE RAILROAD INSCRIBED WITH THE LEGEND "ARMY-PEOPLE JOINT SECURITY STATION" AND PRESUMABLY INTENDED TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY AND PREVENT SABOTAGE ALONG THE TRACKS. IN THE VICINITY OF TSINAN THERE WERE BANNERS EXPRESSING "WELCOME TO THE TSINAN RAILWAY BUREAU SMALL GROUP TO INSPECT OUR WORK." THE ONLY OTHER POSTERS AND BANNERS OBSERVED AT RAIL STATIONS AND IN HANGCHOW HAILED THE PUBLICATION OF VOLUME FIVE OF MAO'S SELECTED WORKS. HANGCHOW ITSELF WAS DEVOID OF OVERT POLITICAL ACTIVITY; THE CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE GUIDE INDULGED IN RITUAL DENUNCIATIONS OF WENG SEN-HO AND LESSER LOCAL ACCOMPLICES OF THE GANG OF FOUR BUT INDICATED THAT PROBLEMS IN HANGCHOW WERE IN THE PAST.

4. EN ROUTE BACK TO PEKING FROM PHANGCHOW, INDIAN EMBOFF WITNESSED AFTERMATH OF SERIOUS ACCIDENT AT TSINAN WHICH DELAYED TRANSIT OF HIS TRAIN BY FOUR HOURS. TWO FREIGHT TRAINS HAD CRASHED HEAD-ON, COMPLETELY BLOCKING THROUGH TRAFFIC ON TWO MAJOR TRACKS. WHEN HIS TRAIN FINALLY REACHED TSINAN, HE OBSERVED WRECKAGE. ONE OF THE ENGINES WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED, REDUCED TO MANGLED MASS OF METAL. THE OTHER ENGINE WAS LESS HEAVILY DAMAGED BUT HAD BEEN DERAILED. SCORES OF FREIGHT CARS HAD BEEN WHIPPED OFF THE TRACK UNDER THE IMPACT AND LAY IN CRIMPLED

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HEAPS. HE WAS UNABLE TO DISCOVER CAUSE OF ACCIDENT NOR ASCERTAIN WHETHER ANY CASUALTIES HAD OCCURRED.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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